

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~A culture method in producing a copolyester by a microorganism~~ A method of producing copolyester by a culture of a microorganism which comprises controlling a specific substrate feed rate of an oil or fat to be used as a carbon source at a constant value throughout the whole culture period.

wherein said copolyester is a biodegradable copolyester, and
wherein the microorganism is a microorganism capable of producing said copolyester.

2. (Original) A culture method in producing a copolyester by a microorganism
which comprises applying a different specific substrate feed rate of an oil or fat used as a carbon source between a cell growth phase and a polyester accumulation phase in a culture and controlling the rate at a constant value during the respective phases.

3. (Currently Amended) The culture method according to Claim 1
which comprises controlling the a composition of the produced copolyester by selecting the a species and/or the a control value for the specific substrate feed rate.

4. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 1,
wherein the oil or fat used as a carbon source contains at least one oil or fat selected from the group consisting of soybean oil, corn oil, cottonseed oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil, coconut oil and peanut oil, and fractionated oils obtained by fractionating these oils.

5. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 1, wherein the oil or fat used as a carbon source contains lauric acid in the constituent fatty acids, and the culture is carried out under the condition phosphorus being restricted.
6. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 1, wherein the microorganism is selected from the group consisting of microorganisms belong to the genus *Ralstonia*, the genus *Pseudomonas*, the genus *Aeromonas*, the genus *Alcaligenes* and the genus *Escherichia*.
7. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 1, wherein the microorganism is a transformed microorganism into which a polyester polymerase gene is incorporated.
8. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 1, wherein the copolyester contains 3-hydroxyhexanoic acid unit.
9. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 2, which comprises controlling the composition of the produced copolyester by selecting the species and/or the control value for the specific substrate feed rate.
10. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 2, wherein the oil or fat used as a carbon source contains at least one oil or fat selected from the group consisting of soybean oil, corn oil, cottonseed oil, palm oil, palm kernel oil, coconut oil and peanut oil, and fractionated oils obtained by fractionating these oils.
11. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 2,

wherein the oil or fat used as a carbon source contains lauric acid in the constituent fatty acids, and
the culture is carried out under the condition phosphorus being restricted.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 2, wherein the microorganism is selected from the group consisting of microorganisms belong to the genus *Ralstonia*, the genus *Pseudomonas*, the genus *Aeromonas*, the genus *Alcaligenes* and the genus *Escherichia*.

13. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 2, wherein the microorganism is a transformed microorganism into which a polyester polymerase gene is incorporated.

14. (Previously Presented) The culture method according to Claim 2, wherein the copolyester contains 3-hydroxyhexanoic acid unit.

15. (New) The method of producing copolyester according to claim 1, wherein said copolyester comprises hydroxybutyric acid.